

MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COAST AREA COMMITTEE MEETING JANUARY 21, 2000

Welcome and Opening Remarks

LTJG Gabrielle McGrath, USCG, opened the meeting by informing the Committee that the Central Coast area harbor masters from Santa Cruz, Moss Landing, and Monterey have been invited to discuss issues affecting the harbors in the area. After this introduction, LTJG McGrath turned the meeting over to Mr. James Stillwell, the Moss Landing Harbor master.

Issues Affecting Central Coast Harbors

Mr. Stillwell presented the Committee with an overview of the issues currently affecting his harbor. . Other than the P/V WESTERN FLYER which has an over 1000 gallon fuel capacity, most of the vessels in the harbor carry less than a 300 gallon maximum fuel capacity. The breakwater outside of the harbor is made up of boulders. There are two concrete blocks on the bottom near the entrance that could possibly cause a future incident. Mr. Stillwell is requesting the funds to purchase a skimmer and the training for his personnel to be able to operate it. The cost for these items would be approximately \$30,000 for the skimmer and \$10,000 for the training. This equipment could be used for all three harbors in the Central Coast. The Committee discussed the issue and brought up the point that a skimmer is not effective on cleaning up sheens. These types of spills make up the majority of those in all of the harbors. The agencies and contractors would be more willing to support a trailer of sorbents. These materials would more effectively remove the oil. Moss Landing currently has an oily water separator and a 2500 gallon capacity barge. The Mr. Stillwell also mentioned that the recent heavy rains picked up spilled oil from the surrounding watershed and dumped oil-contaminated runoff into the harbor.

Central Coast Process Exercise Planning

The Committee discussed planning for the upcoming process exercise. The group determined that a scenario involving a spill at Monterey harbor would be the most realistic for a drill. Warden Fitzsimmons volunteered Mr. Patrick Cotter to chair the subcommittee to develop the scenario and begin planning for the drill. Mr. Cotter requested volunteers to act as members of this subcommittee and planned for a meeting at 1000 on February 24, 2000 at the Monterey National Marine Sanctuary office in Monterey. The group plans to present the Committee with a report on the planning status for the exercise at the next meeting.

Upcoming Training

The Committee discussed upcoming training for the Central Coast Area. Ms. Heather Parker-Hall, NOAA, offered to present a course on Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Teams (SCAT), particularly for the members from California State Parks. NOAA will also host a Scientific Training for Oil and Chemical Spills (STOCS) in Seattle from June 19th through the 23rd. The course is free; however, participants must pay for their own food, lodging, and transportation. Select members will report back at the next meeting on the dates for upcoming First Responder Operational (FRO), Incident Command System (ICS), and Hazardous Waste Operations (HAZWOPER) training.

Other Area Committee Activities and Recent Spills

LTJG McGrath briefed the Committee on the activities of the other Area Committees in the San Francisco Bay COTP zone. The San Francisco Bay and Delta Area Committee completed the 2000 revision of the Area Contingency Plan. The plan is now available on the MSO San Francisco Bay website. The group

decided on a three-year revision cycle for the plan. Currently, the Committee is reorganizing the structure of the subcommittees to address recent areas of concern. The next meeting will be held at 9:30 AM on March 7, 2000 at the Banners Club on Coast Guard Island in Alameda. The North Coast Area Committee is continuing their planning for the PREPEX. The drill is scheduled for the week of December 9, 2000. The National Strike Force Coordination Center (NSFCC) from Elizabeth City will be coming out to assist in the planning process. The Committee's next meeting will be held at 2:00 PM on April 26th at the Adorni Center in Eureka.

Recent spills throughout the area were discussed. On January 7th, the F/V ISABELLA capsized and sunk with one fatality near Pfeiffer Point, CA. The vessel was floating beneath the water surface near the pristine but inaccessible shoreline of the Big Sur area of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary with a reported 80 gallons of diesel fuel on board. In a unique cooperative operation between the Coast Guard and Monterey Bay NMS, the MSO hired a contractor to raise the vessel and remove the oil. NMS arranged to tow the vessel to Port San Luis Obispo and out of the Sanctuary. Approximately 380 gallons of diesel fuel were ultimately recovered from the vessel's tanks. Another recent case involved a 70,000 gallon raw sewage spill in Pacific Grove. The case was of particular concern because none of the local trustees were notified of the incident.

New Business

Mr. Ernie Sirotek, Union Pacific Railroad, informed the group of improvements that have been made within the railroad since the exercise back in September. Although the notifications still go through St. Louis, the railroad has 10-digit equivalent numbers for 911 in the rail's operational areas. UPRR is looking to increase the capacity per car. In order to do this safely, they are making improvements to the bridges along the line to ensure they will withstand the extra weight.

Set Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held at 10:00 AM Thursday, March 16, 2000 at the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve at 1700 Elkhorn Road, Moss Landing, CA.